

U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Office of Public Affairs, Region IV
611 Ryan Plaza Drive - Suite 400
Arlington, Texas 76011-8064

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CONTACT: Breck Henderson October 16, 1997
OFFICE: 817/860-8128
PAGER: (800) 443-7243 (065477)
E-MAIL: bwh@nrc.gov

NRC, NPPD TO DISCUSS APPARENT VIOLATIONS
AT COOPER NUCLEAR STATION

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff will hold a predecisional enforcement conference Friday, October 17, with officials of Nebraska Public Power District, the operator of Cooper Nuclear Station, near Brownville, Nebraska, to discuss three apparent violations of NRC requirements.

The conference will begin at 9 a.m. at NRC Region IV offices in Arlington, Texas. The meeting will be open to public observation; NRC officials will be available afterward for questions.

The apparent violations consist of several examples in which plant personnel failed to promptly recognize, document, or correct conditions in the plant that might have affected safety.

The first apparent violation was the failure to recognize that the accumulation of large volumes of water in certain areas could render the standby gas treatment system inoperable. The standby gas treatment system is an air filtration system used to clean air from the reactor building before it exhausts to the atmosphere under some accident conditions. The problem was not analyzed and corrected promptly.

In the second apparent violation plant maintenance workers failed to recognize that mud clogging the residual heat removal system's heat exchanger could pose a plant safety problem and did not perform a proper analysis to address the situation.

The third apparent violation consists of an aggregation of several instances in which potential safety problems were not recognized and corrected promptly. Individually the problems were of lesser significance, but together indicate the potential for a larger problem.

The decision to hold a predecisional enforcement conference does not mean that NRC has made a final determination that violations did occur or that enforcement action, such as a monetary fine, will be taken. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss the apparent violations, their causes and safety significance, and to provide NPPD officials with an opportunity to point out any errors that may have been made in the NRC inspection report and present corrective actions that have been taken.

No decision on the apparent violations or any contemplated enforcement action will be made at this conference. Those decisions will be made by senior NRC officials at a later time.

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